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SECONDARY EDUCATION IN THE UNITED STATES¹

AN HISTORICAL SKETCH

III. THE HIGH-SCHOOL PERIOD—*Continued*

IN connection with this tendency one other educational aspiration of the American people must be taken into account, besides the growing demand for direct control on the part of the state: and that is the desire for consecutiveness in state systems, from the lowest grades to the highest. More and more we have been moving toward the ideal of the *Einheitsschule*. We have found ourselves more or less consciously striving toward the standard set up by Huxley when he said, “No system of public education is worth the name of national unless it creates a great educational ladder, with one end in the gutter and the other in the university.” And this desire and striving have grown up with a new ideal of social relations, a new democracy, which in its full development is peculiar to the nineteenth century.

We saw that in the old colony days the need of a middle grade education, except for those intended for college and for one of the learned professions, was not widely recognized nor felt. Society was still largely organized on distinct levels.

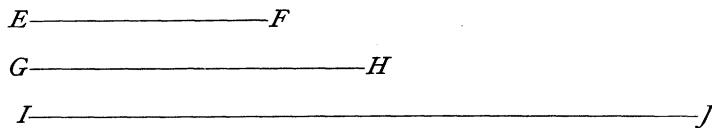


People still spoke of “the quality.” The difference between the professional and directive class—represented in the diagram by the line *AB*—and the common people—represented by *CD*—was apparently accepted as generic. The colleges, with the grammar schools leading up to them, were for the higher class. The educational provision for the lower class extended only to schools of elementary grade, and was very scanty and fragmentary at best.

The Revolutionary period and the years next following saw a

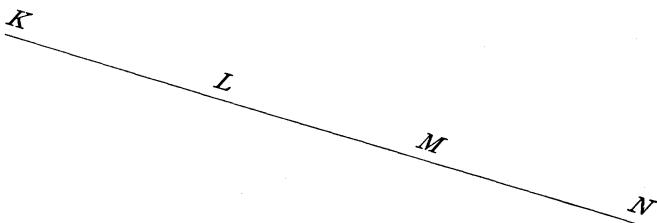
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steadily advancing differentiation of society—represented in the second diagram by the greater number of levels and their nearer approach one to another:



The newly recognized educational needs of a middle class were now met by the academies in such of their courses as were not planned with reference to preparation for college.

With the advance of nineteenth century democracy, the social levels of earlier days have been upset. No one speaks of social classes now, except under his breath.¹ Our present-day society knows no levels: we recognize no generic distinction between its several grades. Its extremes may be much farther apart than were those of an earlier age, but the lowest and the highest occupy their several places in one continuous gradation of social distinctions, represented in the third diagram by the slanting line, *K L M N*.



Perhaps we may find in this change one cause of the extreme restlessness which characterizes our modern society. On this social inclined plane, whoever is not on his way to the top is perforce on his way to the bottom. So great a readjustment of social relations as this has been, could not fail to affect our system of education. There has appeared accordingly a widespread

¹ Professor Harry Thurston Peck refers to one phase of this change, when he remarks in a recent article, "From 1793 to 1816 a wave of radicalism, of rampant rudeness, swept over almost the entire nation. The American people ceased to speak in modulated tones and began to yawp."—*The Cosmopolitan Magazine*, April, 1900, p. 686.

purpose to make our system of schools continuous from the lowest to the highest; to place every primary school on a direct line, leading, without by-way or interruption, to the university. The ideal proposed in the Indiana state constitution of 1816 has tended to become virtually the characteristic aim of American educational organization: "A general system of education, ascending in regular gradation from township [district] schools to a state university wherein tuition shall be gratis and equally open to all."

President Henry P. Tappan, of the University of Michigan, presented a statesmanlike report to the regents of that institution, in 1856, in which he discussed the "true position" of the university, "and its relation to our entire system of public education."¹ He said:

An entire system of public education comprises three grades and can comprise but three grades: the primary, the intermediate, and the university.

.... The primary school comes All human learning begins with the alphabet.

The second grade occupies the period of youth—of adolescence or growth. This is the period when the foundations of knowledge and character can be most amply and securely laid.

But let it be remembered that the intermediate grade embraces only the apprenticeship of the scholar. Hence the necessity of universities, as the highest form of educational institutions.²

The highest institutions are necessary to supply the proper standard of education; to raise up instructors of the proper qualifications; to define the principles and methods of education.

Nothing is more evident than that the three grades of education—the primary, the intermediate, the university—are all alike necessary. The one cannot exist, in perfection, without the others; they imply one another.

It is to the honor of Michigan that she has conceived of a complete system of public education running through the three grades we have discussed

¹The text of this report may be found in Superintendent Ira Mayhew's *Reports of the Superintendent of Public Instruction of the State of Michigan for the years 1855-6-7: with accompanying documents*. Lansing, 1858; pp. 155-184.

²President Tappan's definition of a university, which follows this paragraph, is significant. It marks a great change from the view of a college presented by President Clap, of Yale College, in the eighteenth century. President Tappan says, "A university is a collection of finished scholars in every department of human knowledge, associated for the purpose of advancing and communicating knowledge."—*Op. cit.*, p. 161.

above. Nor do these grades exist merely in name. She has established the primary grade of schools and made them well nigh free. She has laid the foundation of an institution which admits of being expanded to a true university. In former days, she had her "branches" belonging to the intermediate grade; and now we see rising up those invaluable institutions, the "union schools," belonging to the same grade. We say not that legislation has adequately reached the entire system, or made provision for its development; but the idea of the entire system is abroad among the people; it has not been absent from our legislation; it has appeared in the reports of superintendents and visitors, and in other documents; and the people, at this moment, unaided by any special appropriation, are organizing above the district school, the best schools of the intermediate grade, less than a college, which have yet existed among us; and are erecting large, tasteful, and convenient edifices for their accommodation. These ideas, spontaneously working in the minds of the people, these spontaneous efforts to create schools of a higher grade must determine future legislation, and indicate the grand point to which our educational development is tending.

The paragraph last quoted introduces a designation of secondary schools which has not thus far been employed in this narrative: the term "union school." This expression and the group of ideas which gathers about it call for some notice here.

Reference has already been made to the fact that the early high schools arose as an extension upward of the schools of elementary grade. Their development was closely connected with the movement for the organization of thoroughly graded systems of schools, and so with the growth of cities, in which our graded schools first appeared. In our earlier school organization, each school, under its single teacher, was commonly complete in itself, and brought together in one room all of the elementary-school children in its district. With the growth of cities, such district schools multiplied in close proximity one to another. The device of uniting such schools and their districts, when it came to be tried made it possible to separate the older from the younger pupils, and to assign to each teacher a different grade of instruction. Even when only two teachers were employed, the work of the higher grade tended to run up into some of the more advanced studies, and eventually to develop into a more or less extended high-school course. In some communities the union of separate districts seems to have been advocated for the

express purpose of providing for a high school. Accordingly, in some portions of the country, as in the states of New York and Michigan, the "union school" soon came to be closely associated in thought with the high school, and the two terms have, in fact, often been used as if they were synonymous.

State Superintendent Ira Mahew, of Michigan, in his annual report for the year 1857, discussed at some length the organization and advantages of union schools. He said:

The Michigan school system originally contemplated three distinct grades of schools, consisting of, (1) the University of Michigan; (2) Branches of the university; and (3) primary schools. UNION SCHOOLS, distinctively known as such, were not primarily contemplated in our system. Indeed, they are of quite recent origin, as a feature in the school systems of our country. And they are not, what they are sometimes supposed to be—a distinct order of schools, like academies, and constituting an intermediate link in our chain of schools, their chief office being to connect the primary school with the university by being converted into what are known as preparatory schools. This I say is *not* their chief office. They are rather an outgrowth from, and an improved condition of, our primary schools. They may and should be established not only in cities and villages, but wherever the population is sufficiently dense to admit of bringing a large number of children into one system of graded schools without embracing too much territory to be thus well accommodated.

The term Union School often misleads. Because, in the early history of these schools, they were often established by the *union* of two or more adjacent single districts, in villages and neighborhoods that would admit of it; it has therefore been inferred that where districts are thus united, there is a *union school*, and that where districts have not been thus *united*, a union school cannot exist.

The true idea would be better expressed by the term Graded School; or, System of Graded Schools, as the case may be. . . .

As cities advance in character and increase in population, the number of schools of the lower and intermediate grades will require to be multiplied, to meet the necessities of the case. This will give an opportunity to perfect their gradation and classification, and will admit of an improved condition of the intermediate and high schools. This is well illustrated in the city of New York, which has its primary schools, for small children; its intermediate or ward schools, which often accommodate a thousand children, each, and which are as perfectly classified and graded as are our best Union Schools, or as the case will admit of; and its high school, under the title of the New York Free Academy, which stands at the head of the system.^x

^x *Op. cit.*, pp. 47 and 49.

Such are some of the salient characteristics of the early high-school movement. It will be in place now to make some note of others of the early schools of this type, and of the earlier efforts toward the establishment of state high-school systems. The following list of schools is by no means complete, even for the time which it covers, but it probably includes the more important high schools established previous to the year 1850:¹

THE ENGLISH CLASSICAL SCHOOL, Boston, Massachusetts, 1821

An account of the origin and early history of this school was given in the *SCHOOL REVIEW* for January and February, 1899 (Vol. VII, pp. 36-41, 103-112).

THE HIGH SCHOOL FOR GIRLS, Boston, Massachusetts, 1826

An account of the origin and early history of this school was given in the *SCHOOL REVIEW* for May, 1899 (Vol. VII, pp. 286-294).

THE CONSOLIDATED HIGH AND PUTNAM SCHOOLS, Newburyport, Massachusetts

Formed in 1868 by associating together the Putnam Free School, the Brown High School, and the Female High School. The Putnam School was founded by Oliver Putnam, who died in 1826, leaving by will a sum of money to establish "a free English school for the instruction of YOUTH wherever they may belong," this money to remain at interest "till it should reach the sum of fifty thousand dollars."²

PUBLIC HIGH SCHOOL, New Bedford, Massachusetts, 1827

Opened June 11, 1827, with fifteen girls and seven boys; closed as a public high school in 1829, and continued as a private high school until 1837; then reestablished as a public high school.³

PUBLIC HIGH SCHOOL, Lowell, Massachusetts, 1831

The first permanent coeducational high school in Massachusetts, and perhaps in New England, and the first of any kind, outside of Boston, established under the law of 1826. The school was absolutely free to all who were competent to attend it, and to many who were not, and in it corporal punishment was never allowed.⁴

¹ Mr. Gifford H. G. McGrew, a member of the graduate seminary in education in the University of California, has in course of preparation what is intended to be a complete list of the public high schools established before 1850. I have made some use of the results of Mr. McGrew's inquiry in making up the partial list above. I should be glad to have, for the purposes of this study, any information with reference to early secondary schools which any reader of this article may be able and willing to send me.

² Catalogue of the Putnam Free School for 1885. Letter from Mr. Walter E. Andrews, the present principal of the school.

³ Letter from Mr. Wilson R. Butler, the present principal of the school.

⁴ WHITCOMB, A. K., *The Schools of Lowell*.

PUBLIC HIGH SCHOOL, Cambridge Massachusetts, 1838

A high school for the whole town, established in that part of the town called Cambridgeport, in 1838, the Hopkins Grammar School of colonial times apparently being merged into this school; classical instruction reestablished in 1843 in Old Cambridge in the grammar school, and also given from that time in East Cambridge, in the Otis School; classes for classical instruction brought together again in the high school in 1847. "In 1854 the Hopkins fund, which, by special permission of the legislature, had been diverted from the public school to the partial support of a private classical school, was brought back to the high school, and from that time one of the teachers of the school has been designated the 'Hopkins Classical Master.'"¹

PUBLIC HIGH SCHOOL, Taunton, Massachusetts, 1838.

The grand jury, at their meeting in June, 1838, "found an indictment against the town of Taunton for neglect to maintain a high school according to the provision of the law" of 1826. Before the trial, however, the indictment was nolle-prossed on payment of costs, as the court desired rather "to secure the fulfillment of the law for the future" than "to punish for past neglect." At a town meeting held August 20, 1838, it was voted to establish a high school "according to the provisions of the laws." The school was opened in September with thirty-nine pupils. At a town meeting, February 4, 1839, it was voted "to choose a committee of two to appear before the legislature and use their efforts to get the law repealed, so far as it interests the town, in being obliged to support a high school." This committee seems never to have reported, but the law was amended so that any town required to maintain a high school "shall be relieved from their obligation by raising and expending annually for the support of town or district schools 25 per cent. more than the greatest sum ever raised by assessment by said town for this object before the passage of this act." In accordance with this act, the town voted, in April, 1840, that "the high school be discontinued on and after Friday night next." In 1848 the legislature voted to return to the earlier mandatory provision for high schools, and the school at Taunton was accordingly reestablished, and was reopened in September, 1849.²

THE CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, 1838

Authorized by act of state legislature in 1836, which repealed a statute of 1818 making the "Lancasterian" system obligatory in the schools of Philadelphia; opened to students October 26, 1838; tentative organization the first year; Professor Alexander Dallas Bache, in charge of the school from 1839 to 1842, shaped its first definite organization; three parallel courses: English, two years; Classical, four years; Modern Languages, four years. Professor Bache, in 1841, described the object of the school as being "especially to provide a liberal education for those intended for business life."

¹ BRADBURY, WILLIAM F. *The Cambridge high school, history and catalogue*, Cambridge, 1882, pp. 7-12.

² *Taunton School Report* for 1885.

Power to confer academic degrees upon its graduates was granted by the legislature April 9, 1849. According to Professor Cliff, the historian of the school, "The existence of the high school as an object of ambition beyond and above the grammar schools, caused a rapid expansion of the lower schools, and a consequent increase of the source of supply of the high school." The classical course was abandoned in 1854, and the English course in 1856 — a virtual giving up of the earlier freedom of election.¹

THE BALTIMORE CITY COLLEGE, Baltimore, Maryland, 1839

Authorized by resolution of the mayor and city council, March 7, 1839, requesting the Commissioners of Public Schools to establish a high school, "in which the higher branches of English and classical literature only should be taught;" organized about October 20, 1839, called at first simply the High School; in 1848 name changed to Central High School, to distinguish it from the Eastern and Western High Schools; reorganized in 1851, the reorganization consisting principally in the adoption of the departmental plan of instruction; name changed to The Baltimore City College by ordinance of Mayor and City Council, approved October 5, 1866; in 1877, course of study lengthened from four to five years.²

PUBLIC HIGH SCHOOL, Charleston, South Carolina, 1839

Established by vote of City Council in April, 1839; opened July 1, 1839; tuition fee, \$40 a year, "the amount thus realized to be supplemented, if necessary, by appropriations by City Council, so that the school should have ample funds for its maintenance;" an annual appropriation, also, of \$1000, "to be invested in city bonds to form a permanent fund for the school;" two courses of study, classical and English, of four years each; for boys only; closed during the war, reopened in 1866.³

CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL, Springfield, Massachusetts, 1841

Organized as a district high school in 1841; became a public high school according to act of legislature May 5, 1849.⁴

PUBLIC HIGH SCHOOL, Middletown, Connecticut, 1841

Said to be the oldest high school in Connecticut.⁵

¹ *The Semi-Centennial Celebration of the Central High School of Philadelphia*, 1888.

Mr. Thomas Sherwin, in his historical sketch of the English High School (Boston), remarks, "The English High School and the Philadelphia High School, which early came to be regarded by competent educators as the two leading schools in the country, were the first, among the institutions maintained at public cost, to afford their pupils a thorough grounding in English, in modern languages, in mathematics, and the elements of science, and these schools have served to a large extent as the models upon which has been built up the existing system of high schools throughout the country (p. XXIV)."

² *The Baltimore City College Register* for 1898-9.

³ *Catalogue* for 1899.

⁴ *Springfield School Report* for 1898; *The Recorder* (a school paper) for October, 1899.

⁵ STEINER, BERNARD C., *The history of education in Connecticut*, p. 56.

PUBLIC HIGH SCHOOL, Providence, Rhode Island, 1843

Graded school system established in Providence in 1829; effort made in 1835 to establish a high school, on the ground that such a step would be of advantage to the grammar schools; City Council voted it "not expedient at this time to establish a high school;" April 9, 1838, ordinance passed providing for a thorough reorganization of the schools, including establishment of high school; Nathan Bishop employed as superintendent the following year; high-school building dedicated March 20, 1843, and school opened, with city superintendent acting as principal. This school had a girls' department from the start. In 1855 the boys' department was divided into a classical and an English and scientific department. Principal David W. Hoyt, in 1886, traced the history of 1138 boys who had been members of the school during the first thirty-three years of its existence. Of these, about one fourth were producers (manufacturers, mechanics, and farmers), one half distributors (engaged in mercantile pursuits, bookkeeping, banking, insurance, and transportation), and one fourth in professional life (including teachers, editors, chemists, artists, actors, musicians, army and navy officers, etc., as well as clergymen, lawyers, and physicians).¹

PUBLIC HIGH SCHOOL, Maumee, Ohio, 1844

Established in the winter of 1843-4.²

PUBLIC HIGH SCHOOL, Sandusky, Ohio, 1845

Reading, spelling, writing, arithmetic, grammar, geography, Latin, French, philosophy, chemistry, and physiology were taught the first year; algebra and astronomy added the next year.³

PUBLIC HIGH SCHOOL, Columbus, Ohio, 1847

"This school offered to the poor and rich alike far better facilities at a less cost than those which had hitherto been enjoyed by the rich alone."⁴

PUBLIC HIGH SCHOOL, Cleveland, Ohio, 1846

Established by vote of the City Council April 22, 1846, for boys only. Girls were admitted the following year. The question of the legality of the school was hotly debated, but in the winter of 1847-8 an act of the legislature was secured, authorizing and requiring the City Council of Cleveland to establish and maintain a high-school department.⁵

CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL, Cincinnati, Ohio, 1847

Founded by the City Council, and open to both boys and girls. "Discontinued in 1851, when the Woodward High School and the Hughes High School were established."⁶

¹ *A brief sketch of the establishment of the high school, Providence, together with the dedicatory exercises of the new building*, Providence, 1878.

HOYT, DAVID W., *Relation of the high school to the community*, *Education*, March, 1886.

² *A history of education in the State of Ohio. A centennial volume*, p. 157.

³ *Op. cit.*, p. 159.

⁴ *Op. cit.*, p. 171.

⁵ *Op. cit.*, pp. 160-164.

⁶ *Op. cit.*, pp. 164, 165.

PUBLIC HIGH SCHOOL, Akron, Ohio, 1847

"Latin and Greek were taught during the first two years, and were then dropped, in opposition to the sentiment of the citizens, but in accordance with the prevailing sentiment of the board, 'that a good practical English education is all that anyone has a right to expect or exact at the hands of a generous public.'" Latin and Greek were restored to their place in the curriculum in 1865.¹

PUBLIC HIGH SCHOOL, Hartford, Connecticut, 1847.

In colonial times a grammar school was maintained at Hartford, which received, in 1655, a gift of thirty acres of land from William Gibbons, in 1664 the sum of £400 from the trustees of the Hopkins fund, and in 1673 a grant of 600 acres of land from the Connecticut Colony, besides smaller gifts. In 1798 the school was incorporated as "The Hartford Grammar School," under a self-perpetuating board of trustees. All of this time the school did not employ more than one teacher at once. It was constituted, under the act of incorporation, "for the education of youth in the rudiments of the higher branches of science, not taught in common schools, of Latin, Greek, and other useful languages, of grammar, of the English tongue, of geography, navigation, bookkeeping, surveying, and other similar studies, preparatory to an education at the university, or a life of active employment." In 1828 the plan of the school was broadened and four teachers were employed. The new plan did not work well, largely because of the inadequacy of the funds. An agitation in favor of a high school followed, in which the Rev. Dr. Bushnell and the Hon. Henry Barnard bore a conspicuous part. March 8, 1847, it was voted, "to establish a free high school for instruction in the higher branches of an English and the elementary branches of a classical education, for all the male and female children of suitable age and acquirements in this society, who may wish to avail themselves of its advantages." The old grammar school was made a part of the new high school, and its fund used for the support of a classical teacher.²

The three main types of American secondary schools are illustrated in the successive stages of the history of this school.

THE GIRLS' HIGH AND NORMAL SCHOOL, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, 1848

Opened February 1, 1848, as the Philadelphia Normal School; the successor of the Model School established under Joseph Lancaster in 1818; in August, 1859, converted into a high school for girls; in 1860 prominence again given to the training of teachers; the school thereafter known as the Girls' High and Normal School.

NEW YORK FREE ACADEMY, New York (City), 1848

An act of the state legislature, passed May 7, 1847, authorized the Board of Education to establish a free academy. This act was ratified by vote of

¹ *Op. cit.*, pp. 168-170.

² *Triennial Catalogue of the Hartford Public High School*.

the city on the 9th of June in the same year. In 1854 this free academy was authorized to grant academic degrees. In 1866, on recommendation of the Board of Education, the institution became "The College of the City of New York."¹

Turning now from the story of the establishment of individual schools, to the adoption of state provision for high schools, we are met at once by a serious difficulty. The high schools were at the first, as we have seen, institutions of the larger municipalities; and their legal history is to be traced in the labyrinth of special statutes and charters for the government of such municipalities. This would be a large task, and so far as I know, it has not yet been undertaken. Yet the general policy of a number of the states, in this matter, found its earliest expression in a series of such special enactments. In several instances, general statutory provision for all of the more populous centers of a state has been made, which took for its model some measure adopted in the first instance to meet the needs of a single community.

The first general provision for anything answering to our idea of a high school, so far as I have been able to learn, was contained in the Connecticut law of 1798. Previous to this time, the requirement that each of the county towns should support a grammar school had been in force. This requirement was now discontinued. In its place, a provision was adopted to the effect that any school society [district] might by a two-thirds vote establish a higher school, "the object of which shall be to perfect the youth admitted therein in reading and penmanship, to instruct them in the rudiments of English grammar, in composition, in arithmetic, and geography, or, on particular desire, in the Latin and Greek languages, also in the first principles of religion and morality, and in general to form them for usefulness and happiness in the various relations of social life."²

A similar provision had been adopted two years earlier for

¹Announcement issued by the college.

²*Report of the Commissioner of Education, 1892-3*, Vol. II, pp. 1253, 1254. This law seems to contemplate, not a high school proper, but rather a hybrid institution—an advanced primary or English grammar school for the most of the pupils, and a Latin grammar school for a select few.

the first school society of Farmington, Connecticut, but Latin and Greek were not included in the list of studies. This was to be a central school, supported by a *pro rata* assessment on the public moneys assigned to the several districts into which the society might be divided.¹

In Massachusetts, the law requiring grammar schools in the towns was so far weakened, in 1824, that towns having a population of less than 5000 were allowed to substitute for such school an elementary school, if the people should so determine by vote at a public election.² This is the low-water mark of public school sentiment in Massachusetts, with reference to the secondary grade of instruction. In 1826, it was enacted that every town having 500 families should provide a master to give instruction in history of the United States, bookkeeping, geometry, surveying, and algebra, and every town having 4000 inhabitants, a master capable of giving instruction in Latin and Greek, history, rhetoric, and logic.³ This act has seen some vicissitudes since its first adoption, but it marks the beginning of continuous provision in Massachusetts for a state system of high schools.

In Ohio, the "Akron law," adopted in 1847, provided for a graded school system in the city of Akron, including a "central grammar school," which was in reality a high school. The provisions of this act were immediately extended to the city of Dayton, and in 1848 to every incorporated town or city in the state, whenever two-thirds of the qualified voters should petition the town or city council in favor of such extension.⁴

In 1848, the third district in Somersworth, New Hampshire, was empowered by the legislature to establish and maintain a high school. Later in the same year, the provisions of this act were extended to all school districts which might adopt it in regular form; and it was further enacted, "that any school

¹ *Idem*, p. 1255.

² *Laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts*, ch. cxi, sec. 1. Approved February 18, 1824.

³ *Laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts*, ch. CXLIII, sec. 1.

⁴ *A history of education in the State of Ohio*, pp. 113, 114.

district, when the number of scholars should exceed 100, might vote to keep such high school or schools as the interests of education might require."¹

State Superintendent Benton, of Iowa, recommended graded or "union" schools in 1848; and legal permission for the organization of higher grades in the public schools of that state was granted in 1849. In 1857, more ample provision was made for the higher schools, "provided that no other language than the English shall be taught therein, except with the concurrence of two-thirds" of the board of education. The general school law of 1858 authorized county high schools.²

The first school law of California, adopted in 1851, provided for the establishment of high schools by any city, town, or village having more than 400 scholars, on petition of two-thirds of the legal voters within such district, or by two school districts which might unite for this purpose while remaining separate in other respects. Not more than one-fourth of the state and county moneys received by any district might be expended for the support of high schools. Districts were authorized also to tax themselves for the support of high schools, but might not expend on such schools more than one-fourth of the whole amount raised by local taxation for school purposes. High schools were required under this act to teach, in addition to the studies of the grammar schools, "bookkeeping, surveying, drawing, music, political economy, Greek and Latin, equal to that what is required for admission into college, Spanish and French."³

In New York, the general school law of 1864 authorized the board of education of any "union free school district to establish in the same an academical department whenever, in their judgment, the same is warranted by the demand for such instruction." Such academical departments were made subject to the Board of Regents in all matters pertaining to their course of education, and were to enjoy such privileges in the University

¹ BUSH, *History of education in New Hampshire*, p. 19.

² PARKER, *Higher education in Iowa*, pp. 27, 31, 37.

³ *California statutes*, 1851, chap. 126, Art. V, secs. 3, 6, 7, 8; Art. VII, sec. 2.

as had been granted to the academies. Provision was made for the formal adoption of existing academies by boards of education, transferring the institutions so adopted from private to public control.¹

In Maryland the old state academy system was swept away by a law of 1865, and a system of county high schools substituted for it. But the change was too radical to be fully carried out. Later legislation provided for the continuance of state aid to academies, which continued to exist alongside of the system of county high schools.²

This sketch will not undertake to give an account of the state systems which have grown up in more recent years. It is enough for the present purpose to have shown in a general way how the high-school movement was begun, and how, not only individual schools, but extensive systems, resting on liberal statutory provisions, were organized and got into full working order within the second and third quarters of the nineteenth century. Before that third quarter of the century had quite come to an end, the foundation of important state high-school systems had been laid in Indiana and Wisconsin, and it is not impossible that other important beginnings of such general sort may have been made which have thus far escaped my notice.

While such early and liberal enactments may be found in a few of the states, in others high schools were established in large numbers without explicit warrant of law. The school law in the several states commonly provided in general terms that the studies to be pursued in the schools should be determined by the local board of school trustees or directors. A minimum list of studies was sometimes prescribed in the statute; and it was commonly held that the school board might provide for the teaching of other subjects, including such as were distinctly of secondary grade.

Objection was made repeatedly to this practice. As was

¹ HOUGH, *Historical and statistical record of the University of the State of New York*, pp. 28, 29.

² SOLLERS, *Secondary education in the State of Maryland*. Chapter II of STEINER'S *History of education in Maryland*, pp. 66-68.

seen in the history of the school system of Virginia, the secondary school is the one grade of instruction which has the most precarious hold on public support. The question as to the authority of local boards to establish high schools without express statutory provision for such schools, was finally decided in the affirmative by the supreme court of Michigan in the case of *Charles E. Stuart et al. vs. School District No. 1 of the village of Kalamazoo*, commonly known as the Kalamazoo high-school case. Inasmuch as this case established the precedent for similar cases in other states while setting the question at rest for the State of Michigan, it is of great importance in the annals of our secondary education. The opinion of the court was prepared by the eminent jurist, Thomas M. Cooley. The right of a school board to employ a superintendent of schools was involved in the case, and this also was affirmed by the court. The decision in this case illustrates admirably the strong tendency which we have noted, in our educational history, toward a complete system of schools, largely supported by taxation, and under public control. It seems fitting for these reasons that space be devoted here to the following somewhat extended passages from the opinion rendered by the court:¹

The bill in this case is filed to restrain the collection of such portion of the school taxes assessed against complainants for the year 1872, as have been voted for the support of the high school in that village, and for the payment of the salary of the superintendent. While, nominally, this is the end sought to be attained by the bill, the real purpose of the bill is wider and vastly more comprehensive than this brief statement would indicate, inasmuch as it seeks a judicial determination of the right of school authorities, in what are called union school districts of the state, to levy taxes upon the general public for the support of what in this state are known as high schools, and to make free by such taxation the instruction of children in other languages than the English.

Certain bearings of the case, which are of local rather than general interest, are discussed at some length. The court then continues :

¹ 30 *Michigan* 69. The text of the decision appears, but in badly mangled form, in the Report of the State Superintendent of Public Instruction of Michigan for the year 1874.

The more general question which the record presents we shall endeavor to state in our own language, but so as to make it stand out distinctly as a naked question of law, disconnected from all considerations of policy or expediency, in which light alone we are at liberty to consider it. It is, as we understand it, that there is no authority in this state to make the high schools free by taxation levied on the people at large. The argument is that while there may be no constitutional provision expressly prohibiting such taxation, the general course of legislation in the state and the general understanding of the people have been such as to require us to regard the instruction in the classics and in the living modern languages in these schools as in the nature not of practical and therefore necessary instruction for the benefit of the people at large, but rather as accomplishments for the few, to be sought after in the main by those best able to pay for them, and to be paid for by those who seek them, and not by general tax. And not only has this been the general state policy, but this higher learning of itself, when supplied by the state, is so far a matter of private concern to those who receive it that the courts ought to declare it incompetent to supply it wholly at the public expense. This is in substance, as we understand it, the position of the complainants in this suit.

When this doctrine was broached to us, we must confess to no little surprise that the legislation and policy of our state were appealed to against the right of the state to furnish a liberal education to the youth of the state in schools brought within the reach of all classes. We supposed it had always been understood in this state that education, not merely in the rudiments, but in an enlarged sense, was regarded as an important practical advantage to be supplied at their option to rich and poor alike, and not as something pertaining merely to culture and accomplishment to be brought as such within the reach of those whose accumulated wealth enabled them to pay for it. As this, however, is now so seriously disputed, it may be necessary, perhaps, to take a brief survey of the legislation and general course, not only of the state, but of the antecedent territory, on the subject.

The review of the educational history of Michigan which follows is full of interest. It includes a consideration of the educational provision contained in the ordinance of 1787; the act of 1817 for the establishment of the "Catholepistemiad or University of Michigania," that whimsical and comprehensive scheme for a complete system of public education, with the more necessary supplemental institutions, all under the direct control of the president and professors of the university; the university act of 1821, which repealed that of 1817, but instituted a university with power "to establish colleges, academies, and schools depending upon the said university;" the act of

1827, "for the establishment of common schools," which followed very closely the early state and colonial school legislation of Massachusetts; the law of 1833, which neither required nor prohibited the establishment of a higher grade of school; the constitution of 1835, which provided for a state university with branch schools, and "contemplated provision by the state for a complete system of instruction, beginning with that of the primary school and ending with that of the university;" the proposal of State Superintendent Pierce for a system of public instruction based on the systems of Prussia and New England, and intended to furnish in the common schools "good instruction in all the elementary and common branches of knowledge, for all classes of [the] community, *as good, indeed, for the poorest boy of the state as the rich man can furnish for his children with all his wealth;*" the discontinuance of the branches of the university, and the growth of the union schools, which in some measure took their place; and finally, the constitution of 1850. Of this last-named document, the court remarks that,

The instrument submitted by the convention to the people and adopted by them provided for the establishment of free schools in every school district for at least three months in each year, and for the university. By the aid of these we have every reason to believe the people expected a complete collegiate education might be obtained. . . . The inference seems irresistible that the people expected the tendency towards the establishment of high schools in the primary-school districts would continue until every locality capable of supporting one was supplied. And this inference is strengthened by the fact that a considerable number of our union schools date their establishment from the year 1850 and the two or three years following.

The opinion of the court as to the legality of the high school is finally summed up in the following words :

If these facts do not demonstrate clearly and conclusively a general state policy, beginning in 1817 and continuing until after the adoption of the present constitution, in the direction of free schools in which education, and at their option the elements of classical education, might be brought within the reach of all the children of the state, then, as it seems to us, nothing can demonstrate it. We might follow the subject further and show that the subsequent legislation has all concurred with this policy, but it would be a waste of time and labor. We content ourselves with the statement that neither in our state policy, in our constitution, or in our laws, do we find the primary school

districts restricted in the branches of knowledge which their officers may cause to be taught, or the grade of instruction that may be given, if their voters consent in regular form to bear the expense and raise the taxes for the purpose.

One of the most notable decisions following the lead of the decision of the Michigan court in this case was that of the supreme court of Illinois in the case of *H. W. Powell et al. vs. the Board of Education, etc.*, which virtually established the position of the high schools of Illinois in the public school system of that state.

At this point, somewhat arbitrarily chosen, to be sure, I will bring this series of sketches to a close. We have seen, in a general way, how American secondary schools arose in imitation of European models; and how they gradually came to present distinctively American types, as there came to be a distinctively American people. We have seen how different kinds of school arose in response to a variety of needs. We have noted the steady movement during the nineteenth century toward the working out of complete systems of educational institutions under full public control, in which the middle position is occupied by the public high school, standing in vital relations with both the elementary school and the university. If we were to pursue the subject further, we should find some of the most interesting recent movements in our secondary education growing out of the effort to adjust the several members of our educational system to one another more perfectly. And at the same time we should find a growing endeavor to adjust the schools to the rapidly changing needs of American society, resulting in new forms of organization, new methods of instruction, and new characteristics of the student life in these institutions.

Any readers of these articles who may have started in, more than three years ago, with the expectation that the series would be brief and continuous, have had abundant opportunity to lose their patience because of the slowness and irregularity with which these several contributions have appeared. I had myself, at the outset, no just conception of the difficulty of the undertaking. Even on the small scale on which the sketch was projected and

with such meager outcome as has been presented, the absence of any earlier work covering the same ground has rendered necessary a greater amount of labor on the writer's part than one might guess. I wish to express anew my thanks to those who have assisted me at different stages of the work. They are so many that to enumerate them for the purpose of making individual acknowledgment would be too much like presenting a catalogue of names.

Unsatisfactory as the sketch must be in its present form, the preparation of it has shown me, in some measure, how the history of our secondary schools is bound up with the general history of American civilization, and has strengthened my desire and purpose to prepare, in the near future, some more complete account of the historical antecedents and present significance of THE AMERICAN HIGH SCHOOL.

ELMER ELLSWORTH BROWN

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA